



HOUSE BILL 436: Support Law Enforcement Mental Health.

2021-2022 General Assembly

Committee:		Date:	August 31, 2021
Introduced by:	Reps. K. Baker, Szoka, Hunter	Prepared by:	Jennifer H. Bedford
Analysis of:	Fourth Edition		Staff Attorney

OVERVIEW: *House Bill 436 would require psychological screening examinations for law enforcement officers prior to employment; educate officers on maintaining good mental health; make officers statewide aware of mental health resources; and create a study on the benefits of physical fitness testing to officers.*

H436 is similar to Part VII of Senate Bill 300.

CURRENT LAW: Chapters 17C and 17E of the General Statutes regulate the North Carolina Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission and the North Carolina Sheriffs' Education and Training Standards Commission respectively. The Commissions are responsible for establishing the requirements for the education and training of law enforcement officers throughout the State.

BILL ANALYSIS: House Bill 436 would:

- Require initial and in-service training on effective mental health and wellness strategies for law enforcement.
- Require an in-person psychological screening examination, if practicable, by a licensed clinical psychologist before employment as a law enforcement officer or criminal justice officer to determine suitability to properly fulfill the responsibilities of the office.
- If an in-person is not practicable, a virtual examination is permitted.
- Encourage the Commissions to provide training by mental health professionals through in-person instruction.
- Direct all agencies employing certified criminal justice and justice officers, to coordinate with make information about State and local mental health resources easily available to all employees.
- Create a study to determine any benefits of ongoing physical fitness training on officers.

EFFECTIVE DATE: This act would become effective when it becomes law. Please see the bill for more information regarding implementation deadlines.

BACKGROUND: The House Select Committee on Community Relations, Law Enforcement and Justice met 5 times during the 2019 Regular Session and made many recommendations. One recommendation was to provide law enforcement additional training and resources for encountering mental health issues related to the task of policing.

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